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A·B·C  
OF

AUCTION  
BRIDGE





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THE A B C  
OF  
AUCTION BRIDGE  
AND  
OTHER BRIDGE VARIATIONS

BY  
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Revised for  
AMERICAN PLAYERS  
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## INTRODUCTION.

THE popularity of Auction Bridge promises to be as rapid and as complete as was that of the parent game—Bridge proper. Just as the superior attractions of the latter over the sober interests of Whist were at once recognized, so are the greater possibilities of the new variant claiming adherents among those who prefer excitement to science in their recreations. And it must be admitted, although as a confirmed Bridge en-

thusiast I grieve to have to concede the point, Auction offers far greater scope for individual enterprise than its older rival, and for a time at least its fascination promises to be irresistible.

For one thing, it appeals to the gambling instinct. It is a clever combination of Bridge, Solo Whist, and Poker, and calls for the qualities which make for success in all three games. The stereotyped Bridge-player would be at as great a disadvantage without a thorough knowledge of the intricacies of Auction as would a Poker player who did not know Bridge. Given each an equal

proficiency, and the player with the Poker temperament will have the upper hand.

I shall, however, for the sake of brevity, take it for granted that readers of this little volume are acquainted with the laws and play of ordinary Bridge. Those who are not can gain the requisite information from any of the hundred and one excellent Bridge manuals. But does there exist a card-player in this year of grace who does not understand Bridge? If so, he must be in too small a minority to deserve special consideration. We will therefore start with the assumption that we are all sufficiently students of

Bridge to be able to appreciate the distinctions between the two games.

And here let it be said that the confirmed Bridge-player will have as much to unlearn as to learn in acquiring the principles of Auction Bridge. For instance, what can be more difficult to grasp than the fact that the calling of "No Trumps" entails no greater risk than a spade declaration? Again, that calling to the score loses its significance, as the opposition cannot win the game on a defeated call, or that as a rule it is more profitable to defeat an opponent's call than to win the game?

The whole point of view is changed, and the more ingrained are the fundamental principles of ordinary Bridge the greater will be the confusion of the player until he shall become imbued with the reckless optimism essential to Auction Bridge, but fatal to its predecessor.

### *THE LAWS.*

I shall first set forward, as briefly as possible, the laws of the game, always, of course, taking for granted that my readers are Bridge-players. The game and the rubber are the same in both cases—thirty points scored below the line, and the best of

three games. Honors, chicane, and grand and little slam are scored above the line and are counted just as in ordinary Bridge. The difference lies in the scoring of tricks made against the declarer. These are invariably scored *above* the line and are counted with the honors at the end of the rubber. They have no bearing upon the game. Only the tricks won by the *declarer* are scored below the line. Every trick below the number the declarer has contracted to make counts 50 points to the opposition, no matter in what suit or call it may be. Thus the failure to make one odd trick in spades is as expensive as in

clubs, diamonds, hearts, or No Trumps. The penalty is uniform.

There is still some diversity of opinion as to the number of points to be scored for the rubber. The more established rule is to award 250 points, but many players still prefer to score 50 points for each game won and an additional 200 points for the rubber. Personally I prefer the former method. The laws as to shuffling, cutting and dealing are the same; also those applying to exposed cards and cards liable to be called as played in error.

*THE REVOKE.*

There are differences, however, in the penalty for a revoke. When a revoke against the declarer is claimed, his adversaries score 150 points above the line in addition to the amount of the undertricks by which the declarer has failed to carry out his contract. In the case of the adversaries revoking, the declarer may add 150 points above the line or he may add three tricks to those he has taken, if, for instance, he should need them to complete his contract. In neither case is the penalty increased by a double or redouble, nor is the bonus for a double or redouble (see later) to be taken.



When more than one revoke is made during the play of the hand, the penalty for each revoke after the first is 100 points above the line. The revoking side cannot score except for honors in trumps or chicane.

### *THE DECLARATIONS.*

Before coming to the all-important question of the declaration, wherein lies the whole art of Auction as distinguished from ordinary Bridge, it may be as well to set forth the progressive calls as they take precedence of each other. When two contracts are of equal point value, the undertaking to make the greater number of

tricks ranks the higher. Thus a declaration of two tricks in spades overcalls one trick in clubs; two tricks in clubs or diamonds is an advance on one in hearts or No Trumps respectively. To avoid any confusion, it may be mentioned here that the contract to make one trick in any suit means the odd trick; two tricks in a suit, eight tricks, and so on.

The following list of progressive calls may be found useful:

2 spades beat 1 club.

3    "        "    1 diamond.

4    "        "    1 heart.

6    "        "    1 No Trumps or 2  
                 diamonds.

2 clubs	beat	1 heart.
3	"	" 1 No Trumps or 2 diamonds.
4	"	" 2 hearts.
6	"	" 2 No Trumps.
2 diamonds	"	1 "
4	"	" 2 "
3 hearts	"	2 "
6	"	" 4 "

The deal in Auction does not carry with it the advantage of the deal at Bridge. The dealer has to make a compulsory call; he cannot leave the obligation to his partner. Neither is the play of the two hands assured to him as in ordinary Bridge. Either of his adversaries or his partner

may become the declarer by calling above him. It is true that he has the right of the final call after everyone else has been satisfied, but, as we shall see, the odds against his being able to avail himself of this privilege are such as to render it only an occasional benefit.

Having to start the running, however, his policy, for reasons given later, should be aggressive, if possible. Where the hands are about evenly divided in strength, the advantage to the side playing the hand is about one trick. Therefore it is permissible to make a No Trump considerably lighter than would be safe at Bridge.

Failing the nucleus of a No Trump, the dealer should name his strong suit—if it has the higher honors. By bidding a suit of this nature his partner knows what he can count on, if he has a fair hand himself, and it frequently happens that third hand has a good No Trump make if he knows that his weak suit is protected in his partner's hand. Moreover, if the dealer's named suit is especially strong, he can overbid his partner's No Trump at slight cost, if it should seem advisable.

Without a possible No Trump, or a really strong suit, the dealer should call "One Spade." This does not

necessarily correspond to the yarrow original make at Bridge. It merely says to the partner, "I cannot make it No Trump, and have no especially strong suit—my strength, if any, is scattered." So, with "One Spade" from dealer, second player can overcall or pass. If third player calls "Two Spades," "One Diamond" is the lowest contract that takes precedence of it. A double reopens the bidding (see later). For instance, if, say, a call of "Two Hearts" has been doubled, the declarer of that contract can amend it to "Two No Trumps," and so on. And this he can do, if expedient,

without any fear of increasing the penalty for failure, for the loss is the same in both instances—50 points for every trick under the contract and *scored above the line*. Failure does not affect the game, and therefore he may take wider liberties in this direction than at ordinary Bridge. We will give an illustration.

Let us suppose that one of the players has been forced to call "Two Hearts" on doubtful strength. The declaration is doubled and he stands to lose 100 points for every trick below the number he has undertaken to make. Whereas if he raises his call to "Two No Trumps," and it is

not doubled, he at least halves his loss per trick.

Occasionally "One Spade" is a useful call when dealer has a certain No Trump hand, with strength in all four suits. If "One No Trump" or "Two Hearts" has been called over him, he is in a safe position to call "Two No Trumps," and in the very improbable case of being doubled, can then redouble, by this means perhaps forcing the opposition to call beyond their strength, as explained above, when the dealer in turn can double with every chance of defeating the declaration. For it must be understood that the winning of the game



is not the only object of Auction Bridge. The heavy scoring is done above the line by defeating one's adversaries.

With moderate strength in three or more suits, however, an initial call of "One No Trump" can be recommended. The dealer is not likely to be left to make it or to be doubled, and so he at once forces up the bidding to "Two Diamonds" at least and gives his partner some idea of the kind of hand he holds. Thus if the latter has strength in one of the red suits, he can contract to make two in it, so going a step higher.

The dealer should never make an

initial red suit or club declaration without pronounced strength in it and the possession of the head cards. The last consideration must be observed in making such a call at any time. Aces and Kings are of far greater importance than in ordinary Bridge. At all times the dealer should be careful not to deceive his partner. If he possesses, however, overwhelming strength in one of the red suits and nothing else, it will be better for him to commence with a call of one trick in it. It can do no harm and will be at least a guide to third player.

From these remarks it will be seen

that far more strategy goes to the making of an original declaration in Auction than in ordinary Bridge. The dealer does not necessarily set out to secure the play of the two hands or to win the game. Failure may be so much more expensive than the advantage of fulfilling a contract, that his policy is rather to foster the sporting instincts of his adversaries than to take risks himself. "Bluff" enters considerably into the essence of the game, but it may prove expensive when carried too far with players who can draw sound deductions. On the other hand, it is often advisable to incur

certain loss above the line, in order to keep the game open, with the hope of retrieving it in subsequent deals. The loss of the dealer's advantage makes this possible at any time.

Let us now proceed from the original call of "One Spade." In the majority of cases, second player should pass this, for the reason that if third player does not increase it, he makes a confession of weakness, and, fourth player also passing, the dealer is left to get the odd trick in spades with no chance of materially augmenting his score and with a corresponding chance of losing up

to 100 points for failing in his contract.

Suppose, however, that the dealer has made "One No Trump."

Now second hand is in some difficulty. He has gained no certain knowledge regarding the nature of dealer's cards and none whatever about his partner's. If he makes a rash call, he may be promptly doubled, and then he or his partner may be constrained to declare higher in order to get out of a dangerous situation. If, however, he possesses good strength in one of the red suits and high cards in the other suits, what, in fact, would be otherwise a moder-

ate No Trumper, then a two-card call in it is advisable. The bidding will have reached an interesting stage.

Failing such strength, second hand should leave things to his partner, who, possessing unusual strength, may prefer to leave the dealer in with a "One No Trump" call on the tolerable certainty of being able to beat it. To double this call would be a tactical error, as one of the other side would probably take refuge in "Two Diamonds" or "Two Hearts." If this is the object of the opposition, then the first double would be justified. The whole strategy of the

game is to entice the other side into a risky declaration and then *to defeat it*. The higher the stage reached, the greater becomes the value of top cards in any of the suits. Say, for instance, one of the players has been driven to "Three Hearts." He has undertaken to make nine tricks. The adversaries have only to secure five and the declaration fails.

In supporting a partner's call, it is essential to grasp his motive for making it. Is it a voluntary one from strength or a compulsory one to evade a tight corner? Let me give an illustration: "One Spade" has come from dealer. Second

hand declares "One Heart." His only reason for doing so can be genuine strength in hearts. Hence if third hand tops it with "One No Trump," fourth hand, holding, say, one trick in hearts and two other tricks, or good general strength, may with safety say "Two Hearts."

On the other hand, an illustration of a forced call would be as follows: Third hand has raised dealer's original call of "One Spade" to "Two Spades." Fourth hand is unwise enough to double it. Dealer must get out of the declaration somehow. He contracts to make one trick in a more expensive suit. His partner



must not take this to mean that he has made a sound call. The dealer may be only seeking a way of escape. Deductions of this kind have a most important bearing upon the game. The adversaries too should draw the same distinctions. For example, dealer has been driven to call "One Heart." Second hand, having strong cards, with good trumps, may venture on "Two Hearts." If he has made a mistake and it is doubled, he can take refuge in "Two No Trumps." Or if confident of his own ability to fulfil his undertaking, he can redouble. Should, however, the dealer's call have been a weak one, the latter's only

refuge is "Two No Trumps," with the risk of being doubled.

Information afforded by the different declarations is most valuable and should be treasured up. It is as essential to note what has not been called as what has been called. And it is in this connection that the importance of following the score comes in. For instance, if your opponents, with their score at 16 or 18 in the rubber game, passed your partner's "One No Trump" declaration, the inference would be that they were weak in either of the red suits that would take them out with a two trick call. One of them would certainly

have overcalled if he saw any chance of victory. Again, suppose that the bidding had been raised to "Three Diamonds" by one of the adversaries, and instead of doubling, your partner branches into "Two No Trumps," is it not safe to infer that diamonds is his weak spot? The instances may be multiplied and will suggest themselves to the intelligent player. More direct information can, of course, be drawn from what has been called. Say your partner has gone "Two Diamonds"; possessing nothing in that suit yourself, but strength in the other suits, you are at once encouraged to raise the dec-

laration to "Two No Trumps." If such a call came from the other side, the information would in the same way suggest caution.

On the subject of raising your partner's call, there is one point to be noted. It is the original caller of the suit that plays the hand. Thus if your partner should say, "One Heart," and is overcalled by "One No Trump," if you are able to support him by "Two Hearts," which is passed, you become dummy although your declaration is higher.

*DOUBLING.*

Doubling in Auction differs in several respects from ordinary Bridge. In both cases only the score is affected. But in Auction the bidding is reopened by a double or redouble, and a doubled "Two Diamonds" would give place to the higher call of "Two Hearts." A call can only be doubled or redoubled once. A player may redouble a double of his partner's declaration, but he may not double it. If the final declarer's contract has been doubled, and he shall succeed in carrying it out, he is entitled to add a bonus of 50 points to his score *above the line*, and a further

50 points for every trick he shall make above the stipulated number. The value of the trick is also doubled and redoubled. The amount is doubled in the event of his having redoubled.

When the opposing side have doubled and defeated a call they score 100 points above the line for every trick under the number which the declarer has undertaken to make, *i. e.*, suppose the call has been "Two No Trumps" and the player only makes five tricks, his adversaries score 300 points. In the case of a redouble they receive 200 points for every under-trick. But the adver-

saries of a defeated call do not score in trick column.

There is one important exception, however, which tends to minimize the possible hardship of the dealer having to make a compulsory original call on a very poor hand. The maximum amount his adversaries are entitled to score above the line for defeating a doubled one-spade call is 100 points. If his partner raises the call to "Two Spades," the rule does not apply, but, holding no strength himself, third player has thus the option of leaving the dealer with the initial declaration. In spite of what we have said regarding the obligation of third hand to

help his partner out of this more or less formal opening, it may sometimes be expedient to take advantage of this refuge for extreme weakness. A player must use his own judgment when the occasion for exercising caution presents itself.

Doubling plays such an essential part in Auction Bridge that I will add a few general remarks under this heading before passing to the general play of the game. For one thing, it is the most potent factor in forcing the opposing hands to call above their capacity. The loss above the line on a doubled contract when defeated is so heavy that most players will be



tempted to bluff, in order to avoid it. As the liability is not increased by losing in a higher declaration this policy is more often than not justifiable. Thus a player, having called "Two Hearts" and being doubled, may find it expedient to rise to "Two No Trumps," especially if he knows his partner has strength in one of the other suits. If, on the other hand, he is once more doubled, he is in no worse position as regards his losses.

The loophole afforded by the right to call again makes it advisable not to double too soon. "One Card" calls are made so much more lightly at Auction Bridge that to double such a

one is often to frighten the opposition into another declaration. The proper course, as I have said before, is to try and force the declaration higher by calling something else, for to double a one trick make on trumps alone, without general strength, is an error in the majority of cases.

The more favorable position for doubling is when you are on the right of the declarer, as, sitting over his partner, you deprive the latter of the chance of changing the suit. Of course, if you wish the suit changed, the reverse policy holds good. The state of the game must always be a consideration in doubling. In addition

to piling up your score *above* the line, your object is to keep the game open, and so to double "Two Hearts" or "Two No Trumps" at love all in the rubber game is not so justifiable as when the adversaries' score is well advanced. If they just fulfil their contract they go out on the doubled call, whereas, if left alone, they would fall short of the game. If, however, the winning of the contract will take them out in any case there is only an insignificant loss entailed in doubling them and the very solid advantage of frightening them into a more speculative undertaking. The higher the call the better the chance of defeating it.

Finally, it cannot be impressed too clearly upon the beginner that a confident and premature double mostly defeats its object. The opponents take fright and turn to something else. With the certainty of defeating a declaration it is better to simply pass it and be satisfied with the 50 points per undertrick. To double a weak call holding invincible strength in it is a blunder. Only when the strength of a hand would justify a double of a higher call in another suit, or in a "No Trumper," should it be attempted.

I shall now take each of the four hands separately, and, for the sake of emphasis, elaborate the advice already given.

*THE DEALER.*

In the early stages of Auction the position of the dealer was considered a disadvantage. He was forced to make some declaration, no matter what cards he held. And this situation undoubtedly had its drawbacks until the establishment of the rule limiting the loss on one spade to 100 points. Even after the rule was in force several accepted authorities advocated the retention of the convention that the dealer should always declare "One Spade," and third in hand should take him out with another bid—even "Two Spades" on nothing. Finally, the upholders of

this doctrine realized that this procedure merely postponed the evil day, frequently giving the opponents a powerful attack by the double of the "Two Spade" bid from nothing by the fourth player, before the dealer or his partner had disclosed any specific strength.

It has now been generally admitted that, on an even score, the bidding is a rush for the first "No Trump" declaration. As the dealer has the first opportunity to gain this advantage, his position is now accepted as the most desirable. The dealer should declare one No Trump on a very much lighter hand than would warrant that

declaration at Bridge, for several reasons: (1) The adversaries can never score toward their game if he plays the hand. (2) It costs no more to go down in this the most valuable declaration than in, say, one club. (3) It forces a two trick red bid from the adversaries. He can then either pass and try to defeat their bid, or, aided by the valuable information given by the bid, increase his own make. (4) One No Trump is seldom doubled—the solid suit which must inevitably defeat it must be called if it is red, which, of course, affords an opportunity for escape. If the adverse suit is black and long,

there is the strong possibility that the third hand will take a weak make out with two of a red suit, and even if he does not, only 50 a trick is lost, because second in hand, with a long suit of clubs or spades, cannot double for fear of warning the maker off into a two red declaration. (5) His partner can always shift the make to two of red suit if it seems advisable.

Therefore the dealer, without the nucleus of a No Trump, should declare one in suit in which he holds, say, Ace, King, or King, Queen, and others, as an indication to his partner that third hand need not fear that suit in the play of his own "No



Trump.” Failing a strong suit, however,—and by this is meant a suit holding the higher honors,—the dealer should make “One Spade.” This does not correspond exactly to the Yarborough make at Bridge—it may be made from a hand which holds an Ace, King, and other high cards. This make merely says to the partner, “I cannot make it No Trump myself, and my strength, if any, is scattered.” A suit should never be named on the first bid, however, which contains no higher honor than the Queen, no matter what its length.

As we have seen, a No Trump

declaration can be made on a more slender foundation than in ordinary Bridge, so that if he holds moderate cards in three suits, "One No Trump" offers little risk. It is not so expensive if defeated as "Two Spades," and is not likely to be doubled. It forces the opposition, moreover, up to a minimum of "Two Diamonds"; and if third hand possesses strength in only this suit, he may then support the dealer with "Two No Trumps." But as he may reasonably suppose that the dealer's second call was a forced one, he may elect to leave the situation to the latter.

The "Two Diamond" contract

comes round in turn to the dealer ; the inference now is that his partner has no pronounced strength of any kind. Let us consider the kind of hand he himself is holding : Diamonds, three small ones ; hearts, Ace, King and two others ; clubs, Queen, ten and another ; spades, King and two others. Hands of this kind can be multiplied according to the ingenuity of the reader, but it may be taken as typical of a weak No Trumper. To undertake to make two tricks in hearts or No Trumps on it is no light matter. The dealer should therefore be guided by the score. If it is " Love all," he should be advised to pass, but if the adver-

saries are in a position to win the game, and may be the rubber, by fulfilling their contract, then a little bluff is permissible. "Two No Trumps" should be his next call. It will impress the opposition and will make them cautious about doubling. The probability is that the dealer will be left with the call, and may find little or no support from Dummy, but he will at least have kept the game open. The player who does not trust his luck should not play Auction Bridge.

But, holding such a hand as the above, a first call of "One No Trump" has much to recommend it, as at once

forcing the adversaries' declaration up to a high point before either of them has been able to make any disclosures to the other. The more so is this the case when your own weak spot is a black suit. To overcall "One No Trump" on clubs, for instance, is a formidable task. The worst of this policy, however, is that it tells too much to your opponents if they know the game. They would infer from it that you had only a moderate hand, as you would not begin with such a declaration holding pronounced strength.

Occasionally, having a cast-iron No Trumper, you should "lie low," and

use it for forcing the other side into a rash undertaking which can be doubled. Having strong trumps in one of the red suits, some sound players advocate beginning at once with it, on the ground that it is a guide to third player. When your strength in both these suits is equal—say you have five of each and nothing else—it is better to call the lower of the two, *i. e.*, diamonds in preference to hearts. If you are doubled in diamonds, you have a way of escape through the hearts.

The one exception to the stereotyped "One Spade" beginning, which is supposed to convey nothing, is when,

as dealer, you hold great strength in one of the black suits and nothing else. If you conceal the fact, the advantage may be lost. You may be left to make your usual "Two Spades" and may succeed, but your score below the line is of little use except you want a few points to go out. On the other hand, the information that you have the command of that suit may be of real value to your partner. It may give the support he needs in forming a sound No Trumper. Therefore an original call of "Two Spades" or "Two Clubs," as the case may be, should indicate to him the state of your hand. The information you afford, in this instance,

is likely to be of more value to him than to the opposition.

Do not let the fascination of piling up your score above the line make you altogether blind to the advantage of the rubber. It is true that there is more to be made by defeating your opponents than by fulfilling your own contract. I have made 1200 points by defeating a rashly redoubled No Trumper, whereas winning the rubber game with a Grand Slam in No Trumps, and with four aces in your hand, amounts to less than 500 points. Still there are many occasions when it is more profitable to make the rubber than to put your adversaries in on the



problematical chance of their having to present you with fifty or a hundred points above. Hence if you are in an easy position to win the rubber, I say go for a moral certainty. It is true that you may have an equal chance in the next deal, but then it is just as likely not to present itself, and you may have sacrificed a substantial score below the line in order to secure a third of the amount above. On the same principle, it is sometimes cheaper to let the opposition make the rubber on a safe declaration than to hazard a hopeless overcall which is likely to be doubled. There are players who insist that the game should be kept

open at any cost, but the theory, correct enough up to a certain point, can be carried too far.

A first call of "One No Trump" is sometimes expedient with moderate strength, but more as a guide to third hand and to force up adversaries' declaration than with any expectation of being left to make it. For the same reason, he may begin with "Two Spades" or "Two Clubs" if his sole strength lies in either of these suits. Dealer should not leave the opposition with a call which will give them game or rubber if he can possibly avoid it, but he must not be too foolhardy in this direction.

We will now consider the policy of dealer's partner.

### *THIRD HAND.*

After hearing the bids of the first two players the bid of the third hand is generally merely an application of his common sense. A bid of One Spade from the dealer, passed by second in hand, should be a clear warning that the strength is probably divided between himself and the fourth in hand; therefore, without an exceptionally strong hand, or a state of the score which warrants some rashness, he should be very cautious about making an expensive bid without

some means of escape. In this situation second in hand is apt to have more strength than the dealer, and a double may be disastrous.

If the dealer has made "One No Trump," and has been overcalled by a two red bid, third hand should not help the No Trump, without sure stoppers in his adversaries' make unless he holds remarkable strength outside. It is frequently better, holding a good hand in the other red suit, to overbid his opponent in that suit, leaving it to the dealer to decide, after receiving this information, whether it is advisable to carry on his No Trump.

It is a common error of beginners

to help the dealer's one trick bid in a red suit, holding four trumps to a low honor and nothing else. This is dangerous. The dealer is entitled to expect at least one sure trick in the dummy, consequently you should hold a minimum of two tricks before increasing the make, and those tricks should be preferably in side cards, as these are essential to fulfilling an eight or nine trick contract.

To overcall lightly on a red suit is still more indefensible. For instance, third hand, having five small diamonds to the knave and little else of value, calls one of that suit first round. Fourth player rises to "One Heart."

Dealer, having no diamonds himself, but three probable tricks in other suits, risks "Two Diamonds." It is doubled and defeated. The dealer was not to blame. He rightly inferred that his partner had the command in the trump suit.

There is no such objection to an overcall of "One No Trump" on the part of third hand. Indeed, it is to be recommended on very light strength. Nevertheless there should be the foundation of a No Trumper. The advantage lies in its persuasive influence upon the opposition. Eight tricks in one of the red suits is the lowest undertaking that has prece-

dence over it. Then, if not overcalled, it is no more expensive to lose than any other declaration, and, moreover, offers the best chance of success on moderate cards.

To the beginner I would say, never hesitate to overcall your partner's declaration. I have seen so many opportunities lost by this mistaken caution. Because the dealer has gone "One No Trump," that is no reason why you should not raise it to two in a red suit if you see a probability of making eight tricks. You have at once told him the character of your hand, and if he cannot see his way with this assistance, to "Two No

Trumps," then you have relieved him of a very doubtful contract. Again, one of the adversaries may be lured into a risky call which one of you may be able to double. This last consideration is the most important inducement of all. In the same way, with divided strength, third hand should call "One No Trump" over partner's "One Heart" or "One Diamond." Or, if hearts is his suit, he should call it over a diamond declaration; but if dealer proceeds with his diamond contract, third hand should then take it as an indication of confidence, and should not bid over it again. An original call of



two tricks in a black suit should mean an invitation to third hand to call "No Trumps," with the knowledge that one suit at least is thoroughly protected.

In bidding against the opposition, more care will have to be exercised. For instance, dealer has gone "One No Trump" either on first or second round. Second hand has responded with two tricks in one of the red suits, of which third hand holds little or nothing. Even with something in the other suits, he runs a risk in helping his partner with "Two No Trumps." The lead will come from the previous declarer, if he is left with

this contract, and it is certain to be in the red suit of which he is short. Dealer may also hold nothing in it, and the contract may be defeated before the lead is secured. If, on the other hand, third player holds good cards in the trump suit called, he has to decide whether it is better to double it or to support the dealer's call. The latter has shown that he possesses fair general strength. With third hand's trumps, there should be a reasonable prospect of the two hands being too much for the two-trick contract in diamonds or hearts.

We may now turn to the policy of those who, until the declarations are

completed, may be termed the opposition.

### *SECOND HAND.*

We have seen that second hand should, in the majority of instances, pass the original call of "One Spade," because it is morally certain to be raised by third hand and the chance will come again of calling from his strength, if dealer does not wish to be left with the two-spade contract. His position has then been improved by the fact that the second declaration of dealer has conveyed some sort of information as to the nature of the cards he holds. That the dealer will

elect to get out of an unprofitable spade call at any risk is only too probable, and second hand must therefore use his judgment in distinguishing between a forced call and a genuine undertaking. For example, "One No Trump" comes from dealer second round; has this been made from strength or as a tentative means of escape? Or, again, is it a trap set for the unwary? Dealer may be lying low with fine attacking cards, and when second hand blithely calls two tricks in a red suit with fair strength in it and little else, may promptly double. Second hand has thus undertaken to make eight tricks

with perhaps only five trumps as his hope of succeeding.

Second hand should therefore be guided by the general strength of his own cards in raising a "One No Trump" contract or in leaving it alone. If he himself has good general cards and a strong red suit, it is better for him to declare two tricks in the latter. What he should not do is to double the preceding contract. To do so may be to frighten his opponents into the other red suit in which he may not be able to render any help in defeating. And then in calling to his hand he has told his partner wherein lies his strength.

But if second hand is in doubt, he should leave matters to his partner. The state of the score must, of course, be a consideration. If the dealer can make the rubber game on a one-trick contract, there is a more cogent reason for trying to force him up. The extra loss entailed in the event of his succeeding is not of so much consideration as the chance of being still able to keep the game open. But it must be remembered that dealer is quite as ready to score heavily above the line as to win the rubber, and that a double of a light two-trick call in a red suit is only too likely to be the result.

Another reason for leaving fourth hand with the onus of forcing the dealer is that in the event of the latter retaining the play of the hands, second hand as leader has learnt which suit to lead up to his partner. But with genuine strength himself, he should not hesitate to show it. There is a somewhat debatable point in connection with an original one-spade call, when second hand holds complete command in that suit. He should double immediately for three reasons: First. It shows the fourth hand that he need not worry about the spades in case he otherwise would make it "No Trump." Second. It shows

the fourth what suit to lead if third hand gets the declaration. Third. It puts his opponents on the defensive and may force them to a bid which may be disastrous.

I have said little about the play of the hands because, once the declaration is settled, it does not differ materially from ordinary Bridge beyond the fact that more information has been given away before a commencement is made. There is, nevertheless, always the necessity of making the defeat of the call the primary object. Thus when the contract is to make three or four odd tricks, the policy of the opposition should be to



secure every available trick at the earliest opportunity and not to finesse with a view to winning more tricks than are necessary for the purpose. If these can be made, so much the better, but no risks should be taken. So, in opening, second hand should make his high cards early and lead up to any suit in which his partner has shown himself to hold strength. There is no need to lead him a trump if he has doubled a high red-suit declaration, as he is probably relying largely upon strength in other suits.

*FOURTH HAND.*

He is in the most enviable position of all, inasmuch as he has at the start the best opportunity of studying the composition of the other hands. When a high call has been made, it devolves mainly on him to put on the pressure. We have seen that second hand should use some caution in bidding too freely, but his partner may display a more sporting spirit, short, of course, of courting certain disaster. Again, it may often be advisable to make a somewhat slender call in order to inform second hand of the suit he wishes led. Still the danger of being doubled should

always be kept in view. It is in the initial stages that fourth hand may take some liberty.

The advice as to overcalling one's partner applies equally to fourth hand, and should invariably be done without hesitation. The information thus conveyed is invaluable, and the principle of forcing up the opposition is served at the same time. But in all cases, he should be guided by the calls that have been made and use this knowledge with discretion, always watching his opportunity of leaving the opposition in with a risky call.

*THE "LILY" OR "ROYAL  
SPADE."*

The "Lily" or "Royal Spade" is now very generally used among Auction Bridge players, to add to the bidding and to make another declaration to Compete with the heart and no trump bids. The value of the "Lily" trick is in some localities counted at 10, but more generally at 9, and in my judgment the latter is the proper count. The Honors, counting above the line as in other suit declarations, viz. :

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Simple Honors, $2 \times 9$ . . . . .	18
4 Honors, $4 \times 9$ . . . . .	36
4 Honors in one hand, $8 \times 9$ . . .	72
4 Honors in one hand and 1 in partners, $9 \times 9$ . . . . .	81
5 Honors in one hand, $10 \times 9$ . .	90

“CUT-THROAT”  
OR  
THREE-HANDED BRIDGE.

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There seems to be considerable uncertainty as to the correct play of this make-shift game, even among competent Bridge players. Many players, indeed, who are quite familiar with it, would not recognize it under the first title, by which it is sometimes designated. As in Auction Bridge, the difficulties of “Cut-throat” or Three-handed Bridge lie chiefly in the method of scoring, so in order to

clear up any ambiguity on these points, I give here the rules as they have come to be accepted in those circles where the laws are decided by custom.

I may briefly summarize the rules by stating that the three players are against each other as far as the scoring is concerned. The one who cuts the lowest card plays the dummy hand first, and the second lowest takes the place on the dealer's left and takes the deal and the dummy in the following hand, the player on the original dealer's right moving to the left hand of the second dealer and in turn becoming dealer. It will thus be seen

that the player on the dealer's right is always the one to shift his seat on a new deal. After the declaration has been made by the dealer, either from his own or the dummy hand, the rules as to doubling and playing the hands are the same as in ordinary Bridge, the two other players becoming partners.

The methods of scoring are as follows: Only the dealer's score for tricks is placed *below* the line. The adversaries of the dealer *never* score below the line. If they win the odd trick or more, they score the value separately to each of themselves *above* the line. When they have honors between them, they also add the value



to their respective scores, however the honors may be placed in their respective hands. Thus, supposing the dealer wins two tricks in hearts and holds simple honors, he will score 16 above and below the line, but if his opponents gain the two tricks and hold simple honors, they will each score 32 *above* the line and nothing below.

When any of the three players has reached 30 points *below* the line by tricks won as dealer, he marks off a game to himself in the ordinary way, but any points standing to the credit of the other two players at this stage remain and count toward the next game. The rubber is four games, but

if any player secures two games he is held to have won the rubber and adds 100 points to his score therefor. The respective scores are then added up, in the ordinary way, and the winner of the rubber receives separately from each of the other players the amount of the points in his favor after deducting each total from his. Or, in the event of the balance being against himself, he pays each of his opponents the amount due separately to them. The lower of the other two scorers also pays the difference to the third player.

We now come to the weak spot in "Cut-throat" Bridge, which militates

so much against its popularity—the compulsory calls when the dealer leaves the declaration to the Dummy hand. In that case, with three aces in his hand, he is obliged to call “No Trump”; otherwise (first) he calls from his numerically longest suit, *i. e.*, the suit of which he holds the most cards; (second) if he holds an equal number of two or more suits, he calls the suit with the greatest number of pips, counting the ace as eleven, and each of the other honors as ten; (third) if two or more suits have the same number of pips, the higher suit takes precedence, clubs over spades, diamonds over clubs, hearts over diamonds.

This is the most authoritative way of playing "Cut-throat" Bridge, but there are variations which are preferred in private circles. For instance, honors are sometimes counted separately to each player as he holds them—10 for an ace, 8 for a heart, 6 for a diamond, and so on. Thus, if in a No Trump call the dealer had two aces and his opponents one each, he would score 20 above the line and the others 10 each; and in the same manner with a suit declaration.

Again, some players prefer to count 50 only for the rubber.

Then, under the above conditions of only scoring the dealer's tricks below

the line, a rubber may take up the best part of an evening, so it is not uncommon for all scores for tricks, whether won by dealer or by his two adversaries, to be placed below the line. The obvious disadvantage of this is that in defeating the dealer's declaration, one of the opponents may give the game, and perhaps the rubber, to his partner for the time being. But, barring this serious drawback, the game so played is less tedious.

## “DUMMY” AND “DOUBLE-DUMMY” BRIDGE.

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The differences between “Dummy” and “Cut-throat” Bridge are as follows: The lowest cut takes the dummy hand *throughout* the first rubber, the second lowest following him in the second rubber, and so on. The deal goes round in the ordinary way, but after the opening lead there is the choice either of (first) exposing only the dummy hand, or, when the player of dummy is not dealing, of

exposing both dummy's hand and the hand of the dealer's partner, as in Double-dummy.

A point to be remembered is that when the deal comes to the dummy hand, the dealer has to look at *his own hand* first and to declare from it, or pass to dummy just as if he had dealt first to himself; nevertheless, the opening lead comes from the player *on the left* of dummy.

When the player of dummy has the declaration and is doubled, he can redouble although he has seen both hands, but he may not refer back to his own hand before deciding. If the deal is with either of his adversaries he

can only double from his own hand, and must not look at the dummy until the opening lead has been made.

In "Double-dummy" the only differences are that the dealer always deals to himself and never for the dummy hand, and the hand on his left always takes the opening lead and has the first option of doubling.

Neither player may look at more than one of his hands before the opening lead, except in the case of the dealer leaving the call to dummy, when the declaration is compulsory, as above.

In both these games the scoring is as in ordinary Bridge. In Dummy



Bridge the player of the dummy hand takes from or pays both his adversaries.

Neither dummy hand can be penalized for a revoke.



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